

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TU

SUBJECT: DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: ANKARA 1171

1. DEBATE ON THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT BUDGET (WHICH PASSED THE SENATE FEBRUARY 11) BEGAN FEBRUARY 16 IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. FOLLOWING THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENTATION BY MINFINANCE ERGENEKON AND A STATEMENT BY REPUBLICAN RELIANCE PARTY (RR) SPOKESMAN TOSYALI, OPPOSITION REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) CHAIRMAN ECEVIT DELIVERED AN EIGHT HOUR SPEECH INTERRUPTED TWICE BY FISTFIGHTS AMONG PARLIAMENTARIANS.

2. THE BUDGET DEBATE WILL CONTINUE FEBRUARY 17 AND THE VOTE ON ACCEPTANCE OF THE OVERALL BUDGET FOR FURTHER, ITEM-BY-ITEM DELIBERATION WILL LIKELY COME IN THE EARLY HOURS OF FEBRUARY 18. ALTHOUGH WE EXPECT THE RPP TO MAKE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A STRONG EFFORT TO DEFEAT THE GOVERNMENT ON THIS VOTE, THE

GOVERNMENT COALITION (BARRING THE UNANTICIPATED DESERATION OR ABSENCE OF APPROXIMATELY TEN GOVERNMENT DEPUTIES) PROBABLY WILL OBTAIN A MAJORITY OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING. THE RPP WILL HAVE A FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO DEFEAT THE GOVERNMENT WHEN THE COMPLETED BUDGET IS VOTED, THE MOST LIKELY DATE FOR WHICH IS FEBRUARY 29 (REFTEL).

3. ECEVIT, WHOSE 8-HOUR SPEECH ESTABLISHED A NEW PARLIAMENTARY RECORD, ATTACHED THE GOVERNMENT FOR ACROSS-THE-BOARD FAILURES:

(A) HE STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT CLAIMED THAT THERE WERE NO PRICE INCREASES OR SHORTAGES, WHEN IN FACT THE "REAL" PRICE OF COAL HAD ALMOST TRIPLED, MEAT PRICES HAD RISEN BY 30 PERCENT AND FUEL OIL WAS IN SCARCE SUPPLY. HIS CHARGE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS "DISTORTING" FIGURES IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM RESULTED IN THE FIRST FISTFIGHT.

(B) ECEVIT ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT OF "STALLING THE IMPLEMENTATION" OF LAND REFORM AND ASSERTED THAT "DEMIREL'S MENTALITY" WAS "FEUDAL" AND "HAD NOT YET REACHED THE LEVEL OF CAPITALISM."

(C) ECEVIT CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT FOR NOT PERMITTING WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF FACTORIES AND GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES. INSTEAD, HE CHARGED, THE GOVERNMENT VIEWED THE ENTERPRISES AS "FEEDING STALLS" TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT FOR RIGHT-WING COMMANDOS. THIS COMMENT LED TO A SECOND BRAWL.

(D) HE ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT OF PROVOKING STUDENT DISTURBANCES AND EXPELLING "THOUSANDS" OF STUDENTS FROM UNIVERSITIES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND STATED THAT "IN EVEN THE WORST OF COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIONS, SUCH TORTURE WAS NOT INFLICTED ON CHILDREN." HE SAID THAT DEMIREL WAS "HIDING" BEHIND THE CONCEPT OF A NATIONALIST FRONT WHICH PROCLAIMED ITS OPPOSITE TO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM, WHEN IN REALITY THE FRONT WAS OPPOSED TO THE RPP, THE "GENUINE BARRIER" AGAINST COMMUNISM IN TURKEY.

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4. JUSTICE PARTY (JP) DEPUTY ALI ELVERDI STATED THAT ECEVIT'S REMARKS (PARAGRAPH 3D) HAD BEEN IN REFERENCE TO AN ELVERDI SPEECH AND IN REPLY CHARGED THAT "RUSSIA HAD FOUND IN THE RPP THE BEST MEDIUM TO SPREAD COMMUNISM IN TURKEY." THIS STATEMENT TRIGGERED A CLASH INVOLVING A REPORTED 100 DEPUTIES IN WHICH SEVERAL WERE SLIGHTLY INJURED AND DURING WHICH TURKISH RADIO AND TELEVISION (TRT) CAMERAS AND RECORDING EQUIPMENT WERE DESTROYED. THE SESSION WAS

IMMEDIATELY ADJOURNED.

5. IN OTHER POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) A JOINT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT FEBRUARY 13 CALLED FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING COMMITTEES OF INQUIRY (REFTTEL) WAS UNSUCCESSFUL EVEN THOUGH A QUORUM WAS PRESENT. THE JUSTICE PARTY, OBJECTING TO THE PROPOSED RATIO OF SENATE TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SEATS IN THE COMMITTEES, SUCCEEDED IN DEFERRING THEIR FORMATION UNTIL COMPLETION OF THE BUDGET DEBATES BY THE STRATEGY OF NOT SUBMITTING ITS OWN COMMITTEE NOMINEES. CONSEQUENTLY, THE MATTER WAS REFERRED TO THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (CONTROLLED BY THE GOVERNMENT) WHICH WILL DETERMINE THE RATIOS. THE RPP HOPES TO USE THE COMMITTEES' REPORTS TO DISCREDIT DEMIREL; JP TACTICS ARE DIRECTED TOWARD OBTAINING A GOVERNMENT MAJORITY IN THE COMMITTEES AND THUS CONTROLLING THE FINAL REPORTS.

(B) FEBRUARY 14 MILLIYET NSYOGTED THAT VRIMIN DEMIREL, ADDRESSING AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE JP REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY THE PREVIOUS DAY, STATED THAT "ALL SHOULD BE READY FOR EARLY ELECTIONS." ACCORDING TO MILLIYET, HE SUGGESTED THAT THE DATE COULD BE IN MAY, JUNE OR JULY.

(C) NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) DEPUTY IHSAN KARACAM (A FREQUENT PARTY DISSENTER) AT A PRESS CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 13 PROTESTED NSP CHAIRMAN ERBAKAN'S CRITICISM OF ITS COALITION PARTNER, THE JP. HE DEcriED SUGGESTIONS THAT THE NSP FORM A COALITION WITH THE RPP AND ARGUED AGAINST ATTACKS ON THE "FRATERNAL NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY."

(D) THE COUNCIL OF STATE (DANISTAY), IN A MOVE
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WHICH UNDOUBTEDLY WILL CAUSE FURTHER DISPUTATION, SUSPENDED THE DECREE ASSIGNING SABAN KARATAS AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TRTM HOWEVER, THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY IGNORE THIS DANISTAY RULING, AS IT DID PREVIOUSLY WHEN THE DANISTAY VOIDED THE APPOINTMENT OF KARATAS' PREDECESSOR.
NYREN

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